

"Christ Is Preached" - Philippians

1:12-20

Introduction: Six times in these few verses the name of Christ is used. If you look across the pages of your Bible and just scan the words in the book of Philippians you will see the name of Christ many times – it is a favorite topic for the Apostle Paul and it was the Person of Christ that he wanted to emphasize to the Philippian believers so they would not forget their ultimate mission.

These verses are dealing with the Apostle being in prison and how the gospel was still preached by him while there. It deals with the preaching of Christ by others and the glory that all of it – his preaching while in prison, their preaching outside of prison without him – is to bring to the Lord.

One major point to bring out here is that if Christ is preached, and the gospel is given, our responsibility is to rejoice in the fact that lost people hear the gospel and can be saved. We may not agree with every point of other's beliefs and practices but if they are preaching the true gospel and are pointing people to the Lord then we need to let them be and let the Holy Spirit convict them of their wrong, if they are. We need to point out error and false teaching but there is too much nit-picking among those of like-precious faith that the Devil is using to keep us preoccupied with the argument rather than us doing our job in getting the gospel to the world. Unless something is causing error in our church it's not all that necessary to be so concerned with others as to distract us from doing the most important thing – preaching the gospel.

That said, there are some wonderful truths here that we can use to help us through difficult times and to help us deal with others that may not do it our way.

I. God had a plan – vs. 12-14

A. No matter what the circumstance was (or is now) – whatever happens to us happens according to God's plan (as long as we are where we're supposed to be)

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

B. In verse 12 Paul uses the term "should understand." He knew that it wasn't in their nature (and it's not in ours) to understand, fully comprehend, what was happening and he needed them to understand that there are things that God allows to happen to further His gospel. That's what we need to understand.

Gen 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

Deu 8:2-3 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. (3) And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make

they know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

2Co 4:15-17 For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. (16) For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. (17) For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

2Co 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

1Pe 1:7-8 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (8) Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

C. *There is an interesting and important word in this verse that we need to see – the word "rather" – as with Joshua in Genesis 50, although the government imprisoned Paul to stop his "illegal" activities, God meant that for the good of the gospel message*

D. *The outcome of Paul's imprisonment was the "furtherance of the gospel" (the only time in the Bible that phrase is use) – was the spread of the message of*

Christ

1. Being imprisoned allowed him to give the gospel to the Roman soldiers, and it would appear that he was successful on more than one occasion on leading them to Christ – imagine the impact a converted soldier would have on those around him (the Philippian jailor for one – Acts 16)
2. It also allowed him to preach the gospel to the other prisoners – even today, prison ministry is a very fruitful mission field
3. **One important point here** – there are a lot of "bad" things that happen to a believer that happen because of sin or because we are out of the will of the Lord and just simply living the way we want to. "All things" don't work together for the good of the believer and for the cause of Christ in that case – that's not what Romans 8:28 is saying. However, if we are living the way we should, doing what we should for the Lord, then the "bad" things that happen to us we need to be patient with and see what the Lord is going to do with that to further the gospel message.

E. In verses 13-14 Paul points to the case at hand with his imprisonment and the encouragement that was to him in knowing that it had emboldened other believers to preach the Word of God

"without fear."

1. Vs. 13 – his bonds "in Christ" (his imprisonment wasn't because of wrong doing or what we would consider a crime, or for his own political views – it was because of his preaching Christ) were "manifest" to others – everyone knew he was in prison because of the cause of Christ
2. It would appear that the testimony that the Apostle had of the consolation of Christ and the comfort of the believers that he received gave new-found boldness to the believers that he had influence over to preach the gospel more.
2Co 1:3-7 Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; (4) Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (5) For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. (6) And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. (7) And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.
3. **Question** – is our testimony during times of trouble that compelling to others that it would encourage them to preach the gospel? Would it encourage non-

believers to want what we have?

II. The Gospel was preached – vs. 15-18

A. *The ultimate goal for us should be that "Christ is preached" – let God take care of whether it's in "envy or strife" or in "good will"*

B. *Vs. 15 – "some indeed"*

1. There will be those that will preach the Word of God and go about it in such a way that they appear to be doing it for their own personal gain, or to tear down someone else ("envy and strife")
2. There were those in the churches in Paul's day that didn't like him, and didn't agree with him and they set out to go their own way and do their own thing, so to speak
3. He's saying (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) that even though that is the case the gospel was being preached and people were being saved
4. I don't have to agree with everyone on the "particulars" – they don't have to like the way I do things – as long as we're not compromising and giving in to get along with everyone, and we're staying true to the Word of God. It is our duty to point out error, and to "guard" the "flock of God" against the enemies of the Cross.

Heb 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

Act 20:28-33 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (29) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. (30) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (31) Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

1Pe 5:1-5 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: (2) Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (3) Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (4) And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

5. "Of good will" – for the right reason, putting aside any personal differences they might have had, to accomplish the greater goal – "the furtherance of the gospel"

C. Vs. 16-17 describe who those that preach of "envy and strife" are, and who those that preach of "good will" are

1. Vs. 16 describes the "envy and strife" preacher and preaching

a) **It was done out of "contention" – this word is one that represents a motive of self-interest, a mercenary interest (preaching for the money)**

b) **"Not sincerely" – not as a true shepherd guarding and protecting the sheep would do**

c) **"Supposing to add affliction to my bonds" – shows the true heart of that type of preacher – only cares about how he looks, even if it means making the other preachers look bad**

(use illustration about Bread of Life Camp Meeting when Bro. Price preached and Jeff Fugate changed his message to show how Bro. Price was wrong just to make himself look good)

2. Vs. 17 describes the "good will" preacher and preaching

a) **"Love" – what's our motivation in doing what we do for the cause of Christ? Is it love? Imagine if we actually showed to the world that we cared for others – especially those of the "household of faith" (those of our local church)**

Gal 6:6-10 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. (7) Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (8) For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. (9) And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. (10) As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

b) The reason they could set aside any personal differences, or differences of how to accomplish the Lord's work was because they knew that the Apostle Paul was "set for the defence of the gospel" – they knew he was in prison, about to face a court to defend his spreading a religion that went against the Emperor worship, the penalty for which was death.

D. Vs. 18 – "whether in pretence, or in truth"

1. "Pretence" – an outward show or appearance, a pretense or pretext to put forth in order to cover one's real intent

Mat 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

2. "In truth" – for the real reason of preaching the Word of God – that the lost

would be saved, and that believers would be strengthened

3. The fact that Christ was preached is what caused Paul joy and it's what should cause us joy.

III. The glory of God was primary – vs. 19-20

- A. When it's all said and done, when our work is judged by the Lord, our goal ought to be that "Christ shall be magnified." Paul said it in relation to his imprisonment and his potential death – it ought to be our goal to say it in every area of our life.***
- B. These two verses are one sentence, and being so are dealing with one point – seen in the words "as always" – the ultimate goal in our life ought to be to "magnify" Christ, to glorify Him, to lift Him up above all else***
- C. The words "my salvation" in vs. 19 point to the magnifying of Christ – whether he would be physically delivered from prison because of the prayers of the believers at Philippi, and the "supply" (the administration of) of the Spirit working on his behalf to that end; or whether his salvation would be ultimately in heaven through the door of death (vs. 21-23) – Christ would be magnified either way***

Eph 6:18-20 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (19) And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, (20) For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

D. His "salvation" was expressed in vs. 20 where he said it was his "earnest expectation and [his] hope, that in nothing [he] should be ashamed" – no matter what he had to endure (either physically at the hands of the Romans, or mentally through the sorrow that the care of the churches caused him) his overwhelming desire was to not lose his testimony through sin, or failure

E. "With all boldness"

1. Boldness didn't seem to be a character trait of the Apostle Paul's by nature – if it were he wouldn't have needed to ask for prayer over and over for that very thing
2. He would need that "boldness" when he stood before the courts and defended the preaching of the gospel
3. He didn't want anything in his life to be able to be used against him in a court of law ("blameless") to bring shame to the name of Christ

Php 2:14-16 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: (15) That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,

in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; (16) Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

1Co 1:8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. How are we in that regard? Do we have a life pure enough as a believer that we would have the boldness we would need to defend the cause of Christ before others?

Conclusion: Do we see God has a plan for the gospel, and needs us to accomplish it, no matter what may happen in our lives? Do we want the gospel preached, and will we be willing to give God the glory and rejoice in the fact that it is preached, even if we don't care for the person doing the preaching? Do we want to glorify Christ in all that we do, so that we will be able to defend the gospel when the time comes?

That's what this passage is about.